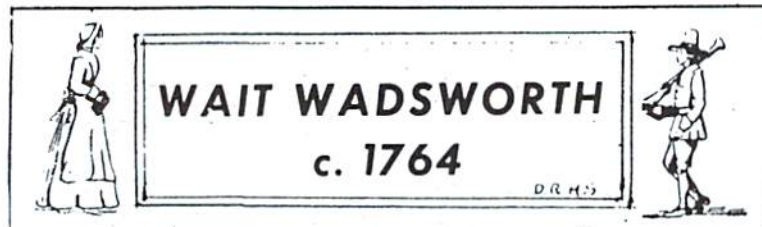


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On the southeasterly slope of Captain's Hill, on part of the original Captain Myles Standish grant, stands a small cottage that Captain Wait Wadsworth built about 1764 when he owned the old Standish farm. Tradition, known occupants, and meager records all point to the builder and the date but actual documents are few. This Wadsworth family is noted for its failure to record births and deaths as well as property transactions.

When Captain Wait Wadsworth sold the Standish farm he reserved the north part for two sons and this house fell to the oldest son, Capt. Joseph. His son, another Joseph, had it next and his daughters Welthea and Mary, lived there until 1887. It is truly a Wadsworth house although in recent years it bore the names of later owners, being sometimes known as the Ricker house and often as the Drew house.

The house looks like an ordinary small gambrel roofed cottage perched on the hillside, but it has many odd and unusual features. In the first place, that gambrel roof was probably put on when the second Joseph lived there and he built it just above the old sloped roof, leaving the early roof in place with only an air space between it and the new roof. The first floor rooms were built around a central chimney and fireplace, regrettably removed some years ago, but the room arrangement conforms to no usual plan.

The construction is the old frame with mortise and tenon corners, as simple and stout today as when built. From the small cellar under the east end can be seen the old floor boards, nearly an inch thick and showing the marks of an old up and down saw mill.

Captain Wait, of Revolutionary fame and with considerable importance in Duxbury affairs, had a large family--14 in all and at one time probably 12 were living in this house. It seems too small a house for such a large family but it was no smaller than most of that time. Captain Joseph Wadsworth had 8 children and the next Joseph only three. From that time on there have been no children in this house, adults only, for more than a hundred years.

Few changes were made in the house until quite recent times and the additions and modernizing have not spoiled the charm of the old house. Indeed, its precarious perch on a small lot flattened out on a hill side may have saved it from too much expansion. That unlikely site for a house is one of many odd things about it, and about the Wadsworths who put it there. Yet, sturdy and comfortable, the house Captain Wait Wadsworth built in 1764 shows little change in appearance beyond the altered roof lines. It is now the home of the Rt. Rev. Russell Davis.

Dorothy Wentworth, Researcher